

CLAIMS

1. A tracheostomy device including a tubular member (10, 10', 10'') adapted to provide a gas passage into the trachea (2) through an opening (4) in neck tissues (5) and an external retainer (13) for retaining the tubular member with the external surface (7) of the neck adjacent the opening (4), characterised in that the patient end (11) of the tubular member (10, 10', 10'') terminates adjacent the internal end of the opening (4), and that the device includes an internal retainer (14, 45, 59, 61) for retaining the tubular member with the internal surface (6) of the trachea adjacent the opening.
2. A tracheostomy device according to Claim 1, characterised in that the device includes a seal (3, 60) for substantially sealing the trachea above the opening (4) into the trachea.
3. A tracheostomy device according to Claim 2, characterised in that the seal (3, 60) includes a fluid passage (34) opening at one end above the seal and extending out of the trachea via the opening (4).
4. A tracheostomy device according to Claim 3, characterised in that the fluid passage (34) is a suction passage.
5. A tracheostomy device according to any one of Claims 2 to 4, characterised in that the seal (3, 60) includes a deformable annular ring (30, 60) arranged to engage the surface (6) of the trachea (2).
6. A tracheostomy device according to Claim 5, characterised in that the annular ring (30, 60) is inflatable.
7. A tracheostomy device according to Claim 5, characterised in that the annular ring (30, 60) includes a resilient foam.

8. A tracheostomy device according to any one of Claims 5 to 7, characterised in that the seal (3) includes a web (31) extending across the ring (30).
9. A tracheostomy device according to any one of the preceding claims, characterised in that the external retainer is a flange (13) and that the internal retainer is a displaceable member (14, 45).
10. A tracheostomy device according to Claim 9, characterised in that the displaceable member is a hinged tab (14), and that the tab is connected with a cord (18) by which the tab can be displaced.
11. A tracheostomy device comprising a tubular member (10'') adapted to provide a gas passage into the trachea through an opening in neck tissues and a seal (60) joined with the tubular member, characterised in that the seal (60) is adapted to seal the trachea above the opening and retain the tubular member in position.
12. A method of enabling flow of gas to a patient's trachea including the steps of forming a gas passage (4) through neck tissue (5) into the trachea (2) and sealing the trachea against gas flow at a location above the gas passage.